DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 110 568 UD 015 384

TITLE After Integration; Problems of Race Relations in the High School Today. A Study of Madison High School with Recommendations for New York City Schools.
INSTITUTION New York City Commission on Human Rights, N.Y.
PUB DATE Oct 74
NOTE 61p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$3.32 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Board of Education Policy; *Case Studies; Civil Liberties; Cocurricular Activities; Faculty Recruitment; Grievance Procedures; *High Schools; Parent Participation; Race Relations; *School Integration; Security; Student Role; Teacher Role; Teacher Workshops
IDENTIFIERS *New York City

ABSTRACT

This report first presents a narrative and analysis of the process and aftermath of the integration of Madison High School in Brooklyn, New York City. Then 13 recommendations are stated, among which are the following: (1) Board of Education should establish a special unit to provide technical assistance for integrated schools; (2) the New York City Commission on Human Rights should provide consultation and guidance to the Board of Education and to schools requiring assistance in establishing better race relations; (3) faculty workshops should be developed; (4) an affirmative effort should be made to involve minority students in extra-curricular activities and maximize interaction between minorities and whites in such activities; (5) the Student Coordinator in the high school should be used more extensively and effectively; (6) all faculty and administrative personnel assigned to posts requiring close contact with students or supervision of extra-curricular activities should be screened for sensitivity to the needs of different ethnic groups and given special and regularized assistance in the human relations aspect of their duties; and (7) a regularized, official grievance method should be established for all segments of the student body. (Author/JM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED110568

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
(566-5588)

AFTER INTEGRATION: PROBLEMS OF RACE RELATIONS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL TODAY

A Study of Madison High School with Recommendations for New York City Schools

by

The New York City Commission on Human Rights
52 Duane Street
New York City

October 1974

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

UD 015384

Abraham D. Beame
Mayor

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Chairperson

New York City Commission on Human Rights

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Chairperson

Preston David
Executive Director

COMMISSIONERS

David H. Litter, Vice Chairman
Irving Chin
Eleanor Clark French
Murray Gross
Rabbi Harry Halpern
Harris J. Klein
Rev. Anthony F. LoGatto
Maria Lopez
Frank P. Mangino
Cornelius McDougald
Delia Rodrigues
Howard Thorkelson
Doris Turner
Courtenay L. Wiltshire

COMMISSION STUDY STAFF

Florencio Linares, Deputy Executive Director
Brooke A. Trent, Study Coordinator
Miriam Leberstein, Report Coordinator
Joan Thompson
John Van Putten
Clara L. Breland

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . . Page 1

ANALYSIS . . . . . Page 16

RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . . Page 37

PART I:

INTRODUCTION

From Friday, December 7 to Tuesday, December 11, 1973, Madison High School in Brooklyn experienced a series of racial disturbances that forced the two-day closing of the school and disrupted a ten-year history of incident-free integration.

Mandated by the City Human Rights Law to "foster mutual understanding and respect among all racial, religious and ethnic groups in the city of New York" and empowered "to initiate its own investigations of racial, religious and ethnic group tensions, prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and disorder occasioned thereby," the Commission on Human Rights initiated an inquiry into the Madison disturbances.

Precisely because of its history of apparently successful integration, the outbreak at Madison underscored questions that have come to the forefront in the struggle to provide equal educational opportunity for all children in America. Even when integration has succeeded in becoming a major goal of educational and urban planners, the means to attain this goal have seemed increasingly elusive. In

too many instances across the nation, we have seen schools become integrated only to become resegregated when the community, the school and other institutions were unable to come to grips with the challenges posed by an integrated situation. The fact is, we know how to integrate — through redistricting, reassignment of students, busing; what we do not know is how to make integration work on a permanent basis.

The fact is that over the past 20 years, the country has understandably been preoccupied with the process of undoing legal segregation by devising mechanisms to simply bring white and black children to the same schools for education. The preoccupation with the legal, physical, and logistical challenges of placing children of different races in the same classrooms, understandable as it is, has detracted from the needs of the setting once children of different backgrounds are physically together. We know a great deal more today about how to bring about physical integration than we do about how to make the school in which integration has occurred a stable, healthy learning atmosphere where faculty, administration, and students relate well to one another.

The schools can hardly be singled out for blame; they merely share with the rest of the nation and with virtually all its institutions the failure to come to grips with the needs of workable integration. And it would be even more irrational and unjust to single out as blame-

worthy Madison, which despite the incidents under scrutiny here. has one of the best records in school integration in this city.

Integration — the catchword of a whole social movement — has too often been discredited as a concept because of the frequent difficulty experienced in converting from racial segregation or isolation. Not only in schools but virtually everywhere in housing, in social situations, in employment, in neighborhoods, failures outnumber successes. In light of the systematic failure encountered in so many of society's institutions, the problems at one high school in Brooklyn are not surprising. That Madison should have experienced a temporary setback in its attempts to deal with integration is not a reason for blame or pessimism, but an opportunity for examination which can help us give the kind of focus that can move the city toward some fruitful new approaches. The value of an analysis of the situation in this school is chiefly that it can help us understand what specific barriers and difficulties are presented by integrated school situations almost everywhere in today's circumstances. Madison can help us determine specific ways to help integration work not alone in Madison but in other schools and other places as well.

Moreover, the Madison conflict poses questions not only for the integration of schools, but for the integration and stability of neighborhoods. The relationship between schools and neighborhoods is a close and reciprocal one but plans for integration almost never

foresee the difficulties or strive to make the relationship between the newly integrated school and its neighborhood a healthy one. Because of its concern for developing strategies to stabilize city neighborhoods, the Commission felt it vital to view school integration concerns within the context of the neighborhoods in which such schools operate.

Madison was not selected for inquiry because it failed where others succeeded, but because it presents for fruitful study a microcosmic version of problems that pervade our nation. We want to stress that our inquiry had as its primary goals not recrimination, or even investigation, but analysis, understanding and remedy-seeking. Indeed, our inquiry, while it necessarily focuses on problems, actually revealed a school that was, we believe, basically healthy, where good things happened daily without the press or public attention that the conflicts occasioned. Many at Madison are working very hard to confront problems which have their sources in a complex combination of historical and social factors, for which the nation has failed to devise adequate solutions. We mean this report to help them, not discourage them in meeting difficult challenges on which all of us in this country need all the help we can get.

The Commission Inquiry

Commission staff were on the scene at Madison as observers from the first outbreaks of fighting among students. This study began

soon after the Christmas recess. The study team consisted of three staff members under the direction of the Deputy Executive Director, Florencio Linares. They interviewed a broad cross-section of people involved in the incident, the school and the community in which Madison is located. Among those interviewed were: Over 50 faculty members, representing one-third of total faculty; administrators, including the principal, the assistant principals, the deans; over 50 students in both formal and unstructured interviews; members of the Parent Association Board, and other parents; security officers; school aides; staff of the Central Board of Education, including the Office of High Schools, Office of School Safety, Coordinator of Student Affairs; Police Department personnel, including Commander of Brooklyn South, Community Relations staff and personnel, 61st Precinct; members of the Mayor's Education Task Force; community representatives, including clergy and local shopkeepers; and other educational experts.

The Commission staff held extensive, confidential interviews with all persons listed, directing its exploration towards determining the interviewees' analysis of the dynamics and problems of the school and the incidents, and eliciting suggestions for preventive and remedial measures.

The Commission received full cooperation from all the parties concerned, and wishes to acknowledge the time and consideration offered by all associated with the school and the community.

Background: A Brief Look At Madison

Madison is celebrating, in 1974, its fiftieth anniversary. Built in 1924, the school has an excellent, cheerful, well-maintained physical plant. It is situated in the upper-middle and middle-income neighborhood of Flatbush in Brooklyn, and its immediate neighborhood is suburban-like, with handsome, substantial private homes. During its long history it has earned a reputation for an academically superior, high achieving student body and an excellent academic program.

Madison was among the first of Brooklyn high schools to receive significant numbers of out-of-zone minority children. Initial voluntary (open enrollment) busing, which began in 1964, was without incident and the Madison community raised no apparent opposition. For a short time afterwards integration was accomplished through a skip-zone plan, in which a certain area in Central Brooklyn was simply zoned for Madison, with all children from that area going to high school at Madison. The current plan is again part of the Board of Education's Open Enrollment Plan, in which Madison receives a certain number of minority students from different areas in North Brooklyn who elect to go there.

The current ethnic ratio for Madison is 70% white, 30% minority; projections for the coming few years indicate little change in this balance. The minority students come from Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, Bushwick, Williamsburg, Brownsville and other North

Brooklyn neighborhoods. Many have attended integrated junior high schools in the Madison area, which serve as "feeders" to the High School. *

Students are given bus and train passes for public transportation and make their own travel arrangements. Many out-of-district students travel for over an hour to get to classes. Most use buses which run along Nostrand Avenue, about 5 blocks from the school. Others use the "D" train, and get off at an elevated station about 10 blocks in the other direction.

Until very recently, Madison was a heavily "overutilized" school, whose large enrollment necessitated an exceptionally long school day. Because of demographic changes and zoning adjustments and the construction of high schools, this condition is easing somewhat. Since the crowded main plant could not accommodate all the students, the ninth grade was and still is housed on the fifth floor of a local elementary school, P.S. 222, located about 10 blocks away from the school. This annex was closed during the December incident, as part of the Madison closing, but remained untouched by the incidents at the school.

---

*For the 1974-75 school year, a Board of Education plan for the court-ordered desegregation of Franklin K. Lane High School on the Brooklyn-Queens border gives minority students from the Lane district a choice of attending one of eleven other high schools in Queens and Brooklyn, of which Madison is one. Some minority students from the former Lane district who did not elect to go to Madison may be assigned there to equalize distribution. The impact of this rezoning on Madison's school population is not expected to be significant, although current census figures will not be available for some time.

The Madison faculty numbers about 150, of which only three are black: a physical education teacher who serves as coach for the swimming team, a home economics teacher, and a guidance counselor. There are no black administrators. Other staff in the school include six security guards attached to the Office of School Safety at the Board of Education and several school aides who perform various clerical tasks and assist in monitoring visitors, hall traffic, etc. The security guards are all minority; the school aides, white.

Madison has an exceptionally diversified academic program with many elective offerings. There are generally three levels of classes: honor classes, regular classes and slower classes. The educational philosophy of the school has been described by its principal as "educational permissiveness" without the many regulations and restrictions common in traditional high schools, although Madison is considered among the traditional rather than experimental schools.

Madison receives federal funds for two special programs. A program funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides remedial instruction in reading and math for students from government-defined "poverty areas," who read below eighth-grade level. The Title I program provides funds for 6 teachers (1 is assigned to the Annex) and for a number of paraprofessionals. All students enrolled in the Title I program are minority, because of the area restriction. Funds from the Emergency School Assistance Act support a program in reading skills for a limited number

of students who read two or more years below grade level, with no restriction as to residence. ESAA classes contain both white and minority students.

The Incidents: A Chronology

The Commission's inquiry did not seek to determine the specific facts of the incidents. In general, there was a consensus among news reports, police reports, and school reports of the specific dynamics of the incidents. The chronology which follows is based on this consensus view, with particular reliance on reports that appeared in the Madison Moment, the student newspaper.

Two weeks before the incidents under investigation, a fight between black and white members of the football team occurred, which was later considered to be the initial "spark" for the ensuing troubles. The fight occurred when two white co-captains attempted to retrieve from a black player the football jersey he wished to keep, against regulations, after the end of the season. Police were called to the school, but after a meeting in the principal's office, the fight was considered resolved and no further action was taken.

However, at least one source, a security officer quoted by the student newspaper, The Moment, saw a much longer standing situation of open conflict. "For the last two months a group of whites have been having confrontations with a black group — it's back and forth. One day one group starts, the next day, the other group starts . . . the whole thing comes down to three or four white guys, and three or four black

guys, from what I see every day. The three or four hard-core ones have this racial attitude, and others listen."

Friday, December 7, 1973

The fight that is generally agreed to be the immediate cause of the racial conflict occurred when a white student leaving the boys' bathroom on the second floor collided with a black student. When a black student tried to break up the fight between the two, some of the white student's friends misunderstood his action and joined in the fight. The fight expanded, with students leaving their classrooms to join in or watch. The fight was broken up by teachers. Police were called, but no arrests were made as the principal, Dr. Samuel Forsheit, did not press charges. A white student was taken by ambulance to a hospital where he was treated for injuries and released. Friday evening, fights broke out at a basketball game at the school. Police were present, but no arrests were made.

Monday, December 10, 1973

Early Monday morning a crowd of white youths massed outside the school and resisted attempts by faculty and administration to disperse them. They rushed into the building through the main entrance and confronted a group of black youths outside the boys' gym on the second floor. The fight which erupted was broken up by faculty and security guards. A group of white students then massed on Quentin Road outside the school, while many black students gathered in the school

cafeteria. A majority of students were in their classes when instruction was suspended by the principal.

White students were told to leave through the main entrance while black students were sent to the cafeteria. White youths massed outside the school, and there was jeering and rock-throwing between the whites and the blacks who emerged from the school at times. At one point, black students responded to a rumor that black girls were trapped inside a luncheonette on the corner of Quentin and Nostrand Avenues, marched to the luncheonette and back, and were almost attacked by white students upon their return to the school. Police contained the white crowd and got the black students into school. Police and teachers began to break up the crowd outside and most of the whites left the area. Motorcycle police supervised the dispatch of white students from the school. Black students were kept in the cafeteria for their protection. City buses were called by police to take black students home; they left the school by 12:30.

Later that afternoon, Dr. Forsheit spoke to teachers and press in the auditorium.

Tuesday, December 8, 1973

Attendance was off by about 30% when classes began. Police and security guards searched students entering the school through the main door. Two youths were found to be non-students and were arrested for criminal trespass.

An early morning meeting between "leaders" of Monday's fights, both black and white, was interrupted by black students running in with the rumor, like the one on Monday, that black girls were "trapped" inside the luncheonette and were being insulted and spat on. Black students rushed out of the building to the luncheonette, which was closed, and then confronted a white crowd gathered on the street near the school. Police intervened to keep the groups apart and in order. During the confrontation, Benjamin Tucker, a black community relations officer in plain-clothes, was struck by a white policeman who mistook him for a student.

Black students turned back by the police returned to the school and began a rampage through the hall, during which two black students and one white student were injured. Some broke into classrooms. White students remained on the street, while black students gathered in the auditorium as police officers and a co-ordinator from the Office of School Safety, Denise Williams, tried to calm them. A group of three black youths, including one former student and two students, who left the school to return home by car were confronted by a larger group of whites. The details of the confrontation are disputed, but a white youth, who attends Grady High School, was stabbed in the left thigh and was taken by ambulance to a hospital and later released. The three blacks were arrested

and charged with attempted murder.*

Police then supervised the boarding of the black students on special city buses, as on Monday. Boarding was completed by 12:45.

Wednesday, December 12, 1973

School was closed. Meetings of parents, students and teachers were held throughout the day. A meeting of the UFT chapter of the school recommended closing for an additional day, until adequate security could be provided.

Black and white students met in a dialogue arranged by the Police Community Relations Division, at the Kings Highway Board of Trade. They too voted to keep the school closed another day.

Dr. Forsheit met also with community leaders, teachers, parents, etc.

Thursday, December 13, 1973

At an early morning meeting, the UFT chapter demanded that there be uniformed police present inside the school. Specifically, they wanted a dozen policemen stationed in a small sixth floor conference room. This demand was approved by Dr. Forsheit and Board of Education

*In addition to arrests mentioned, a 17 year-old white resident was arrested for allegedly throwing a rock at a bus carrying black students home; a 15 year-old who was not identified because of his age was arrested near the school for possession of a deadly weapon; and a black Madison student was charged with disorderly conduct.

officials. But the idea was rejected by representatives of the Mayor's Education Task Force, who participated in the negotiations, and police concurred that this would not be the best means of providing security. Under the security agreement finally reached and accepted by teachers in an afternoon meeting, about 100 uniformed police were to be positioned outside the school and in the area surrounding it. Hallway patrols were to be manned by an extra unit of 40 security guards.

The school administration promulgated an "Emergency Act," a list of rules and regulations designed to promote school safety and security.

Friday, December 14, 1973

School reopened under tight security, with police and security guards checking identification, supervising movement to classes, etc. Only 40% attendance. Dialogues between white and black students continued in school.

Monday, December 17, 1973

60% attendance (normally 80%).

Tuesday, December 18, 1973

Black and white students met with police community relations officers in dialogue at Fort Totten. Fewer police than on Friday present at school.

Wednesday, December 19 - Friday, December 21, 1973

Exams began. No regular classes. Christmas vacation ran December 22, 1973 until January 2, 1974.

PART II :

ANALYSIS

Reactions and Perceptions

The December disturbances took Madison by surprise. With very few exceptions, the teachers, students, administrators, and parents interviewed by the Commission felt that nothing in the recent history or atmosphere of the school had indicated that racial tensions were brewing at a level that could lead to such an eruption. They were shocked, often pained, at the revelation of violence and hostility among students. They were frightened and confused. They had all tried to puzzle out the causes of the incidents and its meaning for Madison, and understandably, had produced differing analyses of the fights and of the school.

The reactions and perceptions of faculty, administration, parents and students provided useful insights into the dynamics of Madison. In general the majority of white adults and students tended to deny the role of racial tensions in the school or the incident, whereas minority adults and students acknowledged such tensions in the school and felt they led to the outbreak.

This is not to imply a clear-cut division between the two groups. In fact there was no unanimity within either group, but rather a variety of opinions. Still, minority persons, because of their personal experiences and heightened awareness of such factors, did tend more frequently to identify the racial problems in the school as contributing to the incident.

It was surprising, especially in the face of the unequivocally racial form the fights took, to find that a large number of persons interviewed in the school categorically denied the role of racial tensions as a causal factor. Many declined to analyze the incidents in terms of underlying causes. They felt they were a superficial, spontaneous outbreak sparked by some indefinable factor not subject to analysis, and which spread through an equally undefinable combination of factors including the normal excitement-seeking of adolescents and pre-exam tensions. They described the incident as a quirk or freak thing. Not only was a deeper analysis impossible, they felt, but it was worthless, since the incident had nothing to do with the regular life of the school and would not likely recur. "Whatever caused it," said one administrator, "has been diffused."

Some of those interviewed attributed the outbreak to the instigation of a few "bad apples" who "would look for a fight anywhere," and create one where one didn't exist. They held that a similar incident could have occurred among whites alone or among blacks alone and that

the racial structure of the fight was merely incidental. Others put the primary blame on what they felt to be a general laxity of discipline in the school and the failure to enforce basic rules and regulations, which allowed and encouraged fight-prone youths to act out. In general, this group saw the remedy to future outbreaks to be quite simple; eliminate the troublemakers or apply such discipline and security measures as would eliminate the possibility for fights. They saw no special problems in human relations in the school as a whole, which may have contributed to the fights or caused them. Rather, they felt the source lay in a few individuals, and the school had only to control such individuals to solve the problem and prevent future incidents.

Many of those interviewed at Madison felt that the incidents were indeed rooted in racial tensions and hostility. Most of these cautioned that the racial tensions were not generalized throughout the school, but rather limited to certain groups, which encompassed more than a few "bad apples," but were still easily defined. They felt the troublemakers or potential troublemakers represented those segments of the school population, black and white, who were generally low-achievers, alienated from the life of the school, and frequent cutters or absentees. The blacks were students who came to Madison with poor skills and preparation, hopelessly behind, unable to relate to the school academically and alienated from the school for cultural and social reasons as well.

The white students involved were also characterized as the school's low-achievers, academically as alienated as the minority students. It was felt that the special characteristics of these white students increased the chances for open conflict with the minority students. The cultural and family background of this white group were said to promote intergroup hostility; they were characterized as inculcated with racial bias at home and in their communities, and it was suggested that they had actually been encouraged by their parents to take on a vigilante role at the school. (In fact, parents and other outsiders and non-students did make up a large part of the white group that apparently instigated the initial battle on Monday, December 9.)

According to this view, where the high-achievers would have learned to react with tolerance or at the least, disengagement, to what was perceived as provocation from minorities, the low-achieving whites were taught to react with reciprocal violence and even to instigate conflicts. Also operative among these white students was the "turf" concept; it was said they viewed the area around the school as their turf, and saw it violated by black students. A particular point of contention was said to be a luncheonette a few blocks from the school, near the bus stop utilized by the minority students, who were said to have "taken it over."

Others at Madison felt that racial tensions were in fact quite widespread in the school, but that the source of such tensions was not

in the special circumstances or relations in the school itself, but in the nature of contemporary American society. The school merely reflected the larger society, and according to this view, was the fortuitous battleground for the hostilities society breeds. "Blacks and whites don't get along anywhere," said one student. "Why should they here?"

In general, then, the Madison school community either rejected the role of racial tensions in the December outbreaks, or saw such tensions as themselves having their roots in factors outside the school, either in the homes and communities of some of the students or in the society as a whole. Many of the interpretations and insights offered contain much that is valid, and contributed to the Commission's understanding of the school and analysis. But, in the Commission's view, the problems at Madison are more deeply involved with the nature and life of the school than the school community generally acknowledged. We base our analysis in part on evidence or information of the racial situation offered by those interviewed, even when they minimized the importance of such factors. The Commission finds that the unusually widespread failure to recognize the existence of problems whose content was in part racial was itself a contributory factor to these problems. Equally significant was the view that even where racial tensions were operative, it was beyond the power of the school to reduce or affect them. This amounts to a kind of fatalism that can only retard positive action that can and should be taken in any integrated school to make integration work today.

The Commission believes that there is much that can be done to attack these problems in a positive and aggressive way. The following section will give our analysis of problems in Madison which we believe contributed to the generation of the incidents. In the section on recommendations we will outline measures that can be taken to alleviate the problems.

Changing School Population

Madison has undergone considerable transformation in recent years. A school of traditionally high academic achievement and unusual student homogeneity, it has been confronted with the challenge of a changing school population and changing student attitudes. The transformation has a dual source. Most dramatic, of course, has been the racial integration of the school, the assignment to Madison of black and Hispanic students from other communities in Brooklyn. Large numbers of these students come to Madison with serious academic deficiencies, and some with behavior problems deriving from personal or cultural factors, which present difficulties to their adjustment to the school. These students travel fairly long distances by bus or subway to get to school, sometimes for as long as an hour and a quarter each way, but all have voluntarily chosen to travel this distance to a school outside their district.

Virtually all of the black students interviewed indicated that minority students in general feel alienated to some degree at Madison;

they feel that the community around the school is hostile territory and that the school is "not ours." Still, many of them welcome the opportunity to get the superior education Madison can offer them.

Madison's white population has also changed significantly in the last few years. Zoning changes have removed from the Madison district certain high-income areas which used to send to Madison well-motivated, high-achieving students; some lower-income areas recently included in the Madison district (Gerritsen Beach was frequently mentioned in this context) now send to Madison many non-academically oriented, lower-achieving whites. The special characteristics of these low-achieving whites contribute to racial tension in the school, for these students are often as alienated as racial minorities from the school's academic mainstream. Many exhibit similar discipline problems, such as habitual cutting or acting-out behavior. And, through adherence to the "turf concept" and a racial bias and hostility often learned before they ever came to Madison, these students are likely to contribute to or instigate racial violence.

While ethnic identification was frequently made of the higher-achievers and higher income areas as Jewish, and of the lower income, lower-achievers as Italian and Irish, the Commission believes that the operative factor here is class, rather than ethnicity. It is possible that certain cultural values pertaining to different ethnic groups may promote or deter better school performance or race relations; but to

generalize such values is to subscribe to stereotypes as unacceptable as those which stigmatize racial minorities. Moreover, such ethnic identification tends to absolve and blame groups in toto, obscuring individual responsibility.

In addition to a changing student population — of minorities and whites sharply different in background from its earlier student population — Madison shares with other schools the repercussions of relaxed and revamping cultural styles prevalent among young people everywhere of every background and race today. Thus even among students who might have once been expected to demonstrate a high level of achievement and general motivation and take a leadership role in extra-curricular activities, there is now what administrators and teachers see as a lack of ambition, drive, and responsibility.

Racial Separation

The major reality of day-to-day personal relations at Madison is racial separation. For a variety of reasons, and with few exceptions, the school remains integrated only on a statistical level. Because of homogeneous grouping by ability, and academic differentials between minority and white students, many classes are heavily white or heavily black. Even when classes are mixed, interaction between students of different races is minimal. In one classroom where seating assignments were voluntary, for example, it was observed that blacks were aligned on one side of the room and whites on the other. The cafeteria remains

a stronghold of black students, who either cannot go home for lunch or who partake of the free lunches; white students avoid it. Even in casual groupings in halls or near doorways, the racial division is paramount.

Extra-curricular activities, often believed to be the best medium for students to get to know one another, are similarly racially divided. The basketball team is virtually all black. "Sing" — an annual musical-dramatic production — has only a handful of black participants. Twirlers and Cheerleaders, selective girls' squads who perform at athletic events, are, with one exception, all white. Boosters, a less selective cheering squad, is almost all black.

This is not to say that there is no interaction or friendship between black and white individuals, but these are notable exceptions. The more generalized reality is separation. A number of factors account for this separation, among them geographical factors and the problems of transportation that make it difficult for minority students to spend longer hours at school, or return after regular classes; cultural factors that make certain activities more attractive for one group of students than another; reluctance to cross racial lines characteristic of many students in this age group today; recruitment and selection policies for extra-curricular activities.

In addition to racial separation, there is a high degree of non-participation by minority students in the life of the school. Thus, minority students are underrepresented in major activities and leadership roles.

For example, while the Student Government president is black, there are very few other minority students at any of the levels of student government, including class representatives. Virtually all of the 20-odd members of the 50th Anniversary Committee, said to represent the acknowledged school leaders, were white.

Non-participation extends to parents as well. Again, the Executive Board of the Parents Association was not only all white, but from the immediate area surrounding the school. Not only minority parents, but white parents from other neighborhoods were not represented. Again, as with student non-participation, many factors are operative here. The Commission does not believe or mean to imply that a deliberate policy of exclusion is to blame, either with student or parent participation. But no affirmative measures were being taken to remedy this situation.

Faculty Attitudes and Responses

Madison's virtually all-white faculty (there are only three black regular teachers and no black administrators) is clearly having trouble relating to the minority student body. Our inquiry showed that, with rare exceptions, this had nothing to do with racism, but was rather the result of cultural differences, unfamiliarity and lack of experience with minority or low-achieving students, and poor human relations preparation in undergraduate or post graduate education. While these factors are shared by other schools, Madison's faculty presents unique problems

because of the long tenure of much of its faculty; precisely because of its academic excellence, Madison has known unusual stability in its faculty, with many teachers having a long-term connection with the school. For some, their association with Madison even goes back to their student days, as former graduates returned to teach there.

For this faculty and staff, the contrast of the present demands of teaching with those of the past is a painful and difficult one. Faculty constantly stressed their feelings that the school had changed for the worse; one teacher described Madison as having gone "from riches to rags." Little enough is being done today to prepare teachers for the special educational challenges presented by poor, inner city children with learning difficulties. The task is sometimes especially difficult for teachers who received their training perhaps thirty years ago and have taught mostly students from academically-oriented backgrounds until recently.

Nor have Madison's faculty or staff — veteran or recent graduates — been prepared to deal with the enormously complex and sensitive problems of encouraging effective race relations. Those of Madison's staff who had taken prescribed "human relations" courses during their teacher education almost unanimously pronounced these totally ineffective. With little guidance or assistance in learning to understand or relate to minority children, faculty often respond with fear or confusion in the face of cultural and behavior patterns they do not

understand. For example, one teacher explained, the neutral bearing or form of expression of a minority student would sometimes be enough to frighten white teachers or students unaware of its meaning. They sometimes perceived aggression where none existed, because differing cultural backgrounds led to different interpretations of behavior, and their own response was in its turn sometimes misinterpreted as hostile or biased by minority students.

Some faculty and most students as well as outside observers, felt that the school had dual standards for students, both for academic performance and for discipline. For example, it was said that teachers would be less likely to confront a minority student for an infraction of discipline than a white student, because of uncertainties or fears of student reaction. It was also felt that teachers had lower academic standards and lower expectations for minority students, because of assumptions of academic inferiority. Others noted the root of differential treatment in the "bend over backward" syndrome; conscious of the special problems of minority students, teachers go out of their way to tolerate behavior they would not tolerate in white youth.

Whatever its source, what was perceived as a dual standard contributed to the racial polarity between students. Minority students indicated at police dialogues and in interviews with the Commission that they perceive such dual standards as racist, since even differential treatment based on sympathetic response implies that the minority

student is incapable of living up to standards enforced for whites. For white students, differential treatment is seen as favoritism toward minorities and engenders much resentment.

An especially compelling example totally outside of the control of the school demonstrates how such racial polarization can develop from differential treatment. Some white students and parents felt that whites were being shortchanged by not being accorded the special aid and resources available to poor blacks, even when the white need was as great. Thus, because under federal law, Title I Program-funded aid for students with reading problems is restricted to students from certain geographically determined "poverty" areas, this in effect made it open only to minorities, even though there were white students otherwise eligible for a program for those reading below grade level. The ESAA program, with no geographical restrictions, did serve both whites and minorities but, with less funding, was a much smaller program and in addition, was open only to those students over two years behind in reading. Thus, the needs of many white students with reading problems were in fact not being met as well as those of some minority students with similar problems.

Another consequence of faculty confusion in the face of the presence of minority students is the use of the denial mechanism in refusing to acknowledge the severity of the problems brought by minority students and the resulting racial tension in the school. This tendency to deny the existence of problems informed the majority of interpre-

tations of the racial incident offered by teachers and administrators. In the Commission's view, the failure to recognize the existence of racial tension and racial polarity is itself a contributing factor to the problem. Its major result is to preclude the development of an active and affirmative program to deal with such tensions. Again, this may well be rooted in a well-meant intention to deny basic differences between groups, but its effect is to preclude measures to deal with the real problems presented by real differences.

Community and School: Influences and Interaction

The area of Flatbush immediately surrounding Madison is an exceptionally quiet one of prosperous, single family homes. It has a tradition of political liberalism and tolerance and was among the first Brooklyn high schools to receive out-of - district minority students. Unlike some other Brooklyn high schools, where a vociferous opposition was raised to busing of students from minority areas, Madison's initial experience was unmarked by any open opposition. Some parents and teachers insisted that not only was there no overt opposition, but the school and community were unanimous in welcoming minority students. Other local residents and former Madison parents recalled some quiet opposition although no open hostility.

In any case, the general atmosphere in the community today is far different. Where once this area would have been neutral or liberal on questions of race, an active opposition to real or imagined minority

incursions is growing. This has taken the form of local campaigns against a planned Health Related Facility a few blocks from the school and against North Central High School (now Edward R. Murrow High School) to open ten blocks from Madison with a student body to be drawn from the entire borough. Some observers attributed the change in tone to an influx of new white residents who had moved from other city neighborhoods that had experienced both deterioration and racial change. It was said that their fears and those of older residents resulted in a "Fort Apache mentality" on the part of some residents, who view Flatbush as a last fortress of liveability in Brooklyn and resist minority presence which they view as a precursor of irreversible urban decay.

Black students coming to Madison have met with hostility from the community. From our interviews, the Commission found that some in the community view their very presence as an intrusion or invasion of their neighborhood. Some white homeowners and business people along the streets heavily used by minority youths on their way to or waiting for the buses complained of this "invasion" frequently, and said they were made to feel barricaded in their homes by youths sitting on stoops, or gathered in groups along the street. Certainly, large numbers of youths of any race can disrupt the peace of a basically residential area today, and some individual students may have occasionally acted in a manner threatening to older persons. But there is some indication that the reactions toward black youths are at least partly

overreactions, informed by basic fears and distrust of minorities. Local police, for example, denied that any major problem of crime or disruption exists which is caused by the bused-in students. And merchants along nearby Kings Highway, traveled by students who use the "D" train for transportation, denied, sometimes vigorously, that there were any special problems posed by out-of-district students.

Community hositility was implicated as a cause of the incidents at Madison by some teachers and students, who suggested that some adults as well as students might have deliberately instigated the fights to provoke fears and hostility in the community and marshal open opposition to the presence of minorities in the school. The Commission found no evidence of such a plot, but it is clear that white community residents and other outsiders did participate in the fights, as many non-students were apprehended by police and school officials. Many of the faculty and administration pointed to this fact as proof that the incidents were the work of "outside agitators." While the Commission acknowledges that outsiders participated in and assisted in the instigation of the incidents, the genesis of the fight lies in conditions and tensions in the school. Still, these hostile elements in the community do affect the school atmosphere, working to shape the attitudes of white youths and the responses of minority youths. Those minority students who consider the school area "hostile territory" are reacting to cues they receive from the area and some of its residents.

It should also be noted that the community residents most readily identified by interviewees as "responsible" for the incidents were said to be from the more distant, lower-income white ethnic areas. The tendency to blame these specific areas tends to exonerate the immediate Madison area, which is presented as far more tolerant. From observations of the community, however, the Commission found that racial fears and hostility are far more pervasive than many at Madison believe, encompassing more than the lower-income white areas widely cited as the sources of racist values. Racial fears, tensions and hostility are not the exclusive province of the lower-income area. It is part of the reality of life in New York City today that such attitudes are growing in areas previously considered liberal strongholds, where racial prejudice was considered minimal. As one observer put it, "Gerritsen Beach (a low income white area some distance from Madison) is just a scareword. Everyone is getting like Gerritsen Beach."

While community hostility is rarely expressed by physical aggression, as during the fights, it has a pernicious effect, not only on the school, but on the stability of the community as well. There exists a real danger that the Madison area, like other white communities, will create a self-fulfilling prophecy by overreacting to its own unbased fears. There is already evidence of an overly fearful reaction to the presence of minorities in the school. One community resident told us that Madison was considered a "black school" despite the fact

that it is 70% white, and that it was considered undesireable. Neighborhood residents with children nearing high school age were said, in the wake of the fights, to be reconsidering whether to send their children to Madison, and contemplating a move from an otherwise desireable area. Similarly, after the incidents, some local residents and real estate people expressed fears that the conflict in the school would threaten community stability and home values, although no evidence whatsoever exists of an acceleration in home-selling or a drop in property values. Should unbased fears continue to grow, however, they could indeed affect neighborhood stability.

While these fears are rooted in citywide attitudes and trends, they are at least partly based on specific rumors and misinformation about Madison, which the school has not moved to dispel. There is little interaction between the school and the community, and few neighborhood residents are at all informed about what the school is really like, and specifically, about the nature and characteristics of the minority students who attend it. The school needs to establish better communications with the neighborhood, for its own sake as well as that of the community. With clearly defined and accessible channels of communication open, community residents will be able to express their grievances or fears about the students in the area in a constructive, productive way. Similarly, school officials will be able to provide information and insights that might well stem

unfounded rumors and unbased fears, as well as take specific corrective action. The time to tackle instability in this and every neighborhood is before it becomes a reality. That time is now in Flatbush.

Discipline and Security

Some faculty and other observers interviewed by the Commission attributed a large part of the causes of the incidents and of general problems in the school to a laxness of discipline and security. While the Commission found that there were in fact some problems in this area, these were by no means central to the fights. Had the outbreaks been solely the work of a "few bad apples" as this group of interviewees maintained, then suspension of known discipline problems might have forestalled an eruption. Similarly, had only outsiders been mainly responsible for the conflict, a better security system which effectively kept them out might also have prevented an outbreak. But in the Commission's assessment, the "bad apples," "troublemakers," and "outsiders" at most set off a spark for the readily available tinder of racial tension in the school. Without the tinder, the spark would have been readily extinguished. Without the tinder, the spark itself might never have been set off.

This is not to discount the fact that there are problems with discipline and security in the school as there are in many others in this troublesome period in urban America. The Commission is unable to

assess the degree to which discipline was excessively lax before the incidents, since Commission observers came to the school only after a stricter regime was imposed in the wake of the outbreaks, but a general picture of the school's discipline policy did emerge from our interviews. The school administration has invoked such measures as suspension more rarely than in similar schools, and daily rules and regulations of the school are more liberal than in other schools. The school atmosphere was described by a Board of Education official as "democratic, student-oriented, humane" with discipline "midpoint in a spectrum from authoritarian to laissez-faire." Another observer called it "mildly chaotic."

There was some evidence of laxness as a result of reluctance to impose certain standards, as in the case of teachers who did not report cutters because the absence of the students was not felt to matter and even made teaching easier. Such attitudes, when communicated to students, are not likely to maintain a respect for rules and discipline. While there were areas of clear need for tightening, especially as to troublesome individuals, the Commission did not uncover evidence that would place Madison with schools in the city which have major discipline problems.

Another more readily defineable problem area is that of the security guards. Six school security guards from the Office of School Security of the Board of Education are assigned to Madison. The guards are all minority group members; five are black and one Hispanic. Since

they wear civilian, informal clothes and wear no special badge or identification, they can be and are often confused with students. Some observers felt that this detracted from their visibility and their ability to act as a deterrent to unruly behavior.

Some white students felt that the guards were unfair and imposed dual standards by more vigilantly confronting white students who break rules than minority students. Other observers felt the guards simply did not do enough, were not sufficiently vigilant in enforcing rules. The guards themselves felt that they were not taken seriously by most faculty, and not shown sufficient acknowledgement or respect. One guard pointed out that one teacher had never even said hello to him, until the guard's importance was made evident after the significant part he took in quelling the disturbances.

The guards are a potentially excellent resource not only for discipline and security purposes, but for intergroup relations as well. Many relate very well to minority students; some even live in the students' neighborhoods and know their families and neighbors. They can often be more effective than other school personnel in dealing with problems these students may have. But because they are generally inexperienced and untrained, they do need special orientation, supervision and guidance to be most effective. The school needs to take special measures to see that their unique potential is in fact realized.

PART III:

RECOMMENDATIONS

The nucleus of our recommendations is that human relations and especially race relations must become a priority of education in integrated schools, not only in Madison, but throughout the city. In the view of the Commission, problems of racial tension at Madison are not beyond the capabilities of the school to affect. The prevalent attitudes of denial of problems or of fatalism, based on the view that the root of the problems is outside the school, are the major barriers to effecting a positive approach. The Commission is familiar with programs in effect in other high schools and has reviewed studies by experts in the area of human relations in integrated schools, which indicate that there is a wide range of measures, which, when well-conceived and properly implemented, can have a positive effect.

Results will not be instantaneous and there will be apparent failures and setbacks. The fact is that little has been done anywhere in the country to develop practical strategies to cope with the daily challenges of integration to make integration work. And many of the measures or programs will be of a partially experimental nature.

Some will depend on the provision of resources outside the school. All will demand courage and commitment from those who seek to implement them.

The Commission stands ready to provide whatever assistance and advice we can.

1. The Board of Education should establish a special unit to provide technical assistance for integrated schools.

New York City schools need a centralized and specialized resource to deal with the problems of intergroup relations in integrated schools. This resource need not be large, but it should be analytical, practical and oriented toward program planning and problem-solving, as most human relations units in bureaucracies are not. Not only Madison, but all integrated schools need assistance in facing the challenge of making integration work, if the disillusionment that stimulates middle class flight from the public schools is to be stemmed.

The school cannot by itself be expected to research and develop the new and sophisticated strategies required; it needs the expert guidance and specialized resources that only the Central Board of Education can economically and efficiently provide, especially to the high schools, which are under the Board's exclusive jurisdiction.

The Board did in fact have an office dealing with intergroup relations, but it has been phased out. What is needed now is a

technical program directed toward aiding schools in analyzing and revising all school policies and practices that hinder effective race relations.

Because of the paucity of research and information in this area, a centralized technical assistance unit will need to begin by making intensive studies of successful integrated situations in schools in New York and elsewhere, and consulting with those experts experienced in framing practical approaches. Guidelines should be developed for gathering data and evaluating the racial situation in curricular and extra-curricular programs in each school, as well as intergroup and interpersonal relations, and for analyzing the effect on such relations of existing policies and practices.

Guidelines should then be developed for administrators, teachers, and all other school personnel for revising policies and procedures in order to establish more effective race relations. For example, there should be guidelines for administrators on selection and training of teachers and personnel; guidelines for teachers for promoting intergroup relations in the classroom; guidelines for faculty dealing with extra-curricular activities to ensure maximum participation by all groups and cooperation between groups; guidelines for handling disturbances or conflicts with an interracial character. When these are spelled out, schools will have a much better chance of taking the initiative to create healthy integrated learning situations.

Once the guidelines are developed, and disseminated to schools, unit personnel should monitor their implementation and work with school personnel to provide such assistance and guidance as necessary, including the conducting of technical workshops for teachers, administrators, other school personnel, students and parents. Procedures should be developed for a reporting system so that individual schools can evaluate and report on measures taken.

The establishment of the centralized technical assistance unit recommended should be a priority goal of the Board of Education, and should have a central place in the Board administration, connected with either the Chancellor's Office or the Office of Planning and Support. The Board should explore opportunities to utilize funds provided by the Emergency School Assistance Act for aid to integrated schools, not only for the skills programs, for which they are now currently used, but for human relations programs as well.

2. <u>The New York City Commission on Human Rights should provide consultation and guidance to the Board of Education and to schools requiring assistance in establishing better race relations.</u>

The New York City Commission on Human Rights is mandated by the City Human Rights Law to "foster mutual understanding and respect among all racial, religious and ethnic groups" and "to cooperate with governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations

in working toward this goal. While the Commission does not currently have the resources to staff a human relations function that can serve every individual school that needs it, the agency does have special insight and experience in intergroup relations that it should and will make available to those working in the public schools.

The Board of Education should consult the City Commission on Human Rights and the Commission should make itself available for consultation on the formation of the technical assistance unit recommended above, and in other matters involving integration in the schools.

3. Faculty workshops should be developed to deal with the role of the teacher in the integrated school.

Even before a technical assistance unit is fully operational, a priority goal of school officials should be to establish a faculty workshop to deal with the role of the teacher in the integrated school. In Madison and elsewhere, the faculty is key to establishing intergroup relations. There is no question that many of the so-called human relations workshops directed toward teachers either in undergraduate, post-graduate or in-service courses, have been ill-conceived and implemented, so that teachers have been turned off to these techniques as ineffective. Still, the Commission believes that a well-conceived, professionally run program of this kind can be invaluable in sensitizing teachers to the special needs and characteristics of minority youth.

To ensure workshops with a fresh and effective approach, school officials should look to outside sources with expertise and proven success to develop and conduct them. Examples of the kind of organization that should be consulted for suggestions and recommendations in the selection of workshop leaders are the Metropolitan Applied Research Center and the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution.

The interim workshops should be replaced as soon as possible by the permanent mechanisms established by the Board of Education technical assistance unit, as recommended above.

4. <u>An affirmative effort should be made to involve minority students in extra-curricular activities and maximize interaction between minorities and whites in such activities</u>.

Madison faculty and administration readily acknowledge the importance of interaction on the extra-curricular level in helping students develop closer relationships and learn to understand each other better. For a variety of reasons, some of which have been mentioned in this report, such interaction is now minimal, and integration elusive. Some of the factors are readily alleviated by certain simple measures. For example, the fact that long distances, time and effort are required to get to school discourages late afternoon or evening participation by minority students. This can be partly overcome by rescheduling rehearsals

and other activities within the school day or closer to the end of the school day. Where possible, arrangements can be made to provide special transportation for students from distant neighborhoods to facilitate participation in such activities.

The selection, recruitment and conduct of some extra-curricular activities work against the involvement of minority students. For example, recruitment for an activity may be by word-of-mouth. If current participants are mostly or all white, recruitment is likely to perpetuate the homogeneous makeup of a group, particularly given the paucity of interracial personal relationships. Recruitment efforts directed toward attracting minority students can be made. These might include open announcements in classes, special efforts to approach likely candidates with personal invitations, and the like.

In some activities or clubs, acceptance is decided by a student group, often a "clique" which uses its control over selection to exclude students outside the clique. This is by no means a new problem in schools; nor is it a consequence of integration or a deliberate creation to exclude minorities. In fact, it has worked historically to exclude any outsiders, usually, in the past, other whites. But the practical effect of exclusion in the context of an integrated school gives added meaning to its consequences. Although its intent may not be discriminatory in the racial sense, its effect is, and that effect needs to be remedied.

Faculty advisors should work with existing cliques, using guidance techniques and, where necessary, stricter controls and sanctions. Groups should be encouraged to determine and draw up themselves specific guidelines for admission which would insure non-discrimination and provide for the participation of a fair cross-section of the student body. Groups which refuse to modify exclusionary practices might be denied the use of school facilities or even be disbanded.

In some activities, there are certain standards of performance used as admission or selection criteria, which may work to exclude minorities. For example, the student newspaper staff is recruited from special journalism classes, which are honor classes open only to students with a certain level of academic skills and achievement, as determined by grades, reading scores, and faculty recommendations. Since honor classes are heavily white, the result is few minority students on the school newspaper. A possible solution might be to open up participation to anyone willing to try out working on the paper, providing a period of apprenticeship or probation. Those successfully completing the trial period would be retained; others would be dropped.

Similarly, a group like the Twirlers, which requires a physical skill and intensive practice, might also offer an apprenticeship to girls who have learned basic techniques but need to perfect them. This should be combined with the special recruitment efforts mentioned above. Such revised procedures, incidentally, can also be expected

to bring to this activity certain white students hitherto excluded, just as the mitigation of clique control will open additional opportunities to whites. This kind of broadening of opportunities for whites as well as minorities is a valuable incidental effect of a review of policies and procedures.

Probably the factor most resistant to remediation will be the cultural differences and unfamiliarity between white and minority students which result in "self-segregation" or "self-exclusion." Minority students will simply not want to participate in certain activities because they believe they do not relate to them; white students may have similar reactions. These reactions may also be based on feelings of inadequacy, impressions of not being welcome in the other camp, or the like. These are not at all atypical reactions to racial rearrangements and polarization being felt throughout this country today. But their effect can be mitigated by the intervention of faculty and other staff.

An example of differing cultural preferences resulting in self-segregation occurs with the Boosters, a cheering team at Madison and other schools as well. White participants prefer traditional cheers; minority members prefer "soul cheers." These differences result in conflict and eventual segregation through dropping out of girls who do not feel comfortable with the chosen routines of the group. A faculty advisor might work with the group to assure an equitable arrangement

that would familiarize both groups with the style of the other, and promote a cooperative rather than competitive approach, with girls from each group teaching the other. Counseling of individual members might also be used, as well as special recruitment from the excluded group or special efforts to recall drop-outs. Moreover, procedures can be developed to preserve cultural traditions while bringing different groups together in a common purpose. In the case of a group like the Boosters, this could mean allowing each group to develop its preferred style, and alternating cheers or "numbers" of each style at sports events. But to eliminate separatism both groups should be required to work together to develop the scheduling, logistics, and other programming details and to hold meetings together in order to learn to appreciate their differences in a cooperative and non-divisive way.

Problems of such complexity require the constant effort and guidance of a faculty person whose major responsibility is to deal with all matters affecting the human relations aspect of extra-curricular activities. This is the envisioned function of the faculty member assigned to the position of Student Coordinator.

5. <u>The Student Coordinator in the high school should be used more extensively and effectively in dealing with intergroup relations among students.</u>

The position of Student Coordinator was established in New York City high schools in 1969, in the wake of widespread student demonstrations and dissidence during the Vietnam war period. The Student Coordinator was to be a faculty member with very limited teaching duties (assigned only one class), to deal full-time with student affairs, and particularly, with the needs of alienated or disaffected students. The Coordinator is assigned by the Principal and the position carries more authority than a regular teacher, giving him or her the ability to deal with both students and faculty.

Because of staff cutbacks and the easing of the student unrest of the late sixties and early seventies, the role of Student Coordinator has been reduced in some schools. He is no longer spared extensive administrative and other tasks. In Madison, for example, the Student Coordinator administers the distribution of transportation passes.

While the level of student unrest and dissidence in the schools has diminished, there are certainly extensive problems with alienated students, with polarization, and with intergroup relations, as we have seen. The Student Coordinator can and should be the key person in the school to monitor and deal with these areas. Madison and other schools which have assigned the Coordinator other duties should reassign him full time to student affairs.

The Coordinator should be selected and assigned by the principal on the basis of his qualifications and ability to handle human

relations issues. He should function as the staff person with primary responsibility for human relations, and should have direct access to and the full support of the principal. He should assure that extra-curricular activities are conducted in a manner consistent with human rights guidelines drawn up by the Board of Education technical assistance unit as recommended, or by the school itself. He should act also as the school's liaison with the Board of Education and other outside resources for human relations. He should develop workshops, interracial student dialogues and other activities to establish improved intergroup communication and relations. He should be the key faculty person on the alert for possible rumors or early conflicts, and should establish procedures for intervention in minor incidents to prevent escalation into major conflicts.

6. <u>All faculty and administrative personnel assigned to posts requiring close contact with students or supervision of extra-curricular activities should be screened for sensitivity to the needs of different ethnic groups and given special and regularized assistance in the human relations aspect of their duties</u>.

Faculty and administrative personnel who serve in advisory capacities are required to work extensively with students with special needs and problems. A teacher working as a grade advisor, for example, must assist large numbers of students who have problems or difficulties with programs, teachers and schedules. He or she must be at the least

sympathetic to students and especially aware of and attuned to the students' background and needs. An unsympathetic, unaware advisor can do much to further alienate students already in academic or social difficulty. No one should be appointed to an advisory or administrative position involving large numbers of students who is incapable of the attendant sensitivity to different racial and ethnic groups demanded by the position.

Similarly, extra-curricular advisors, because they deal in an area crucial to the improvement of intergroup relations, should also be selected for special sensitivity. In addition, the Student Coordinator should orient faculty selected as extra-curricular advisors to the human relations function of their positions and provide continuing guidance on developing improved intergroup relations. Such orientation on a regularized basis might also be a function of the proposed Board of Education technical assistance unit described in Recommendation #1.

7. <u>A regularized, official method should be established for all segments of the student body to communicate views and grievances to administration and faculty.</u>

During the December incidents, one of the most effective measures taken by Community Relations personnel of the Police Department was the structuring of private dialogues which brought together minority and white students involved in the fighting. Students were encouraged to honestly ventilate their opinions and grievances about

the school and particularly about race relations. These discussions gave police valuable insight into school problems and into the dynamics of the incident, and also produced a more cooperative and constructive atmosphere. The success of the dialogues pointed up the need for student input, especially from less articulate students who are not involved in the established student leadership and who have no formal or informal access to faculty or administration. Unfortunately, the police-initiated dialogues did not continue on a regular basis for very long after the incidents, although their value was acknowledged by the school. Perhaps, the initiative for arranging for follow-up should have been with the Student Coordinator, rather than with the students, as it was.

The Student Coordinator or other administrative personnel should work to establish a regularized forum at which minority and white students can air their grievances about school policy or programs with each other and to a selected faculty or administrative person with direct access to the principal and to the decision making powers in the school. The faculty advisor or Student Coordinator should arrange also for specialized sessions, e.g., with security guards, so students can establish more effective communication with different school personnel.

8. A regular orientation program for out-of-district minority students unfamiliar with the school should be established.

Madison participated for the past three years in a Federally-funded program in summer orientation that has proved helpful to the students who took part in it. The program brought minority out-of-district students to the school in the summer before they entered Madison to familiarize them with the school and the community, to assess their skills and academic needs, and to provide them with special academic assistance where needed. Parents were also invited to participate, and a large number did. This program was cut back the last year because of a reduction in Federal funds.

Such a program should be available to all the students who are able to take advantage of it. Students who become familiar with the school and community in this way, under less pressured circumstances, are more likely to feel at ease in the school, to know where to go for help of any kind when it is needed, to establish close relationships with faculty or administrators and, in general, to avoid the kind of confusion and alienation that affects many students.

Reapplication for increased Federal funds under the new ESEA should be made, but in view of limited Federal resources, application should also be made to alternative funding sources. Not only foundations, but banks and corporations as well have shown themselves willing to contribute to programs in schools and communities. In hard financial times such as these, the schools and other institutions must be willing to be more innovative in seeking funds rather than automatically submitting to the dropping of vital programs.

9. A renewed effort should be made to recruit minority faculty members to Madison.

Madison shares with virtually all city schools a huge and unfortunate divergence between minority representation in the student body and in the faculty. Madison administration and faculty readily acknowledged the need for more minority teachers, but cited difficulties in recruiting because of the city-wide paucity of minority personnel and the tremendous competition with other schools for their services.

The positive effect of minority faculty can be salutary indeed in improving race relations in a school. At Madison, we were able to observe the reactions of minority students to a newly hired black substitute mathematics teacher, and to assess their positive response both to him and to the school, as well as their renewed interest in the class and improved feelings of self-worth. Nor is it only minority students who benefit from having minority teachers; white students too can learn invaluable lessons in human relations. One white Madison alumna, a former member of the swimming team, visiting the school at the same time as the Commission, revealed that she had benefitted personally from her close contact with the black swimming coach. Madison's efforts to recruit black faculty will no doubt meet with the same obstacles as in the past, but the value of such faculty warrants a renewed and redoubled effort.

10. Special efforts should be made to develop techniques for reaching alienated white students who may contribute to group conflict.

Madison and other integrated high schools need to pay special attention to the needs not only of minority students, but to those of white students whose academic and cultural alienation and in some cases, educational deprivation, hamper their personal development and pose problems to the school. These white students need special assistance to help them improve, to bring them into the mainstream of school life, to diffuse their hostility and to help them relate better to minority students. The student dialogues suggested above should certainly have as one of their major functions improved communications between white students and minorities.

Another excellent mechanism for improving inter-ethnic understanding and intergroup relations is an ethnic studies program that covers white ethnic heritage as well as black and Hispanic studies. The value of ethnic studies has been recognized across the nation, and some school districts with multi-ethnic populations, such as Detroit, have mandated such courses in the public schools.

In New York City, both the Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers have developed or are developing curriculum guides to ethnic studies. The Board, however, leaves the establishment of ethnic studies courses to the discretion of individual high schools, where they may be developed depending on student demand and administrative and faculty expertise and initiative.

Given the value of such courses, and the continuing problems of intergroup relations, the Board needs to be more aggressive in developing and assisting in the establishment of ethnic studies courses in all high schools with multi-ethnic populations. Students with an improved sense of their own ethnic identity and heritage, as well as those of their schoolmates, can be expected to be more understanding and tolerant of ethnic diversity and of ethnic groups and cultures different from their own.

The United States Congress has recognized the importance of this understanding and passed the Ethnic Heritage Act to provide funds for this purpose. The Board of Education's Bureau of Social Studies applied in 1974 for Ethnic Heritage funds for a program to develop ethnic self-awareness among teachers and students of black, Puerto Rican, Jewish and Italian background in four Brooklyn high schools, including Madison, but the application was denied. In view of the critical importance of such programs, the Board of Education should certainly continue to pursue efforts to obtain funding under the Ethnic Heritage Act, and investigate alternative funding sources as well.

11. More effective use should be made of security guards and better security arrangements should be provided.

As it functions now, Madison's security guard force is not being used in the most effective manner to provide good security and assist in human relations. Because the guards are all minority members

and dress in an informal way, they are often confused with students. Their lack of visibility, supposed to improve their ability to relate to students and also to provide a kind of plainclothes camouflage, may in fact deter their usefulness, as they lack specific identification when needed in an emergency. Guards should be provided with badges to facilitate identification and increase their effectiveness.

Security guards felt that teachers and administration did not consider them valuable members of the school, and that some teachers, for example, did not even recognize or acknowledge them, after months or years in the school, until after the fights broke out. They are given no orientation to the school nor any training. Without specialized orientation, training, supervision and assignments, security guards may in fact not make as important a contribution as they might. However, such training and supervision may provide the support and morale this group needs. In addition, they are potentially a very good resource in relating to minority students; many live in the same neighborhoods as these students and even know the students' families. They can provide guidance to students, as well as suggestions to administration or faculty trying to deal with certain students.

12. <u>An affirmative effort should be established to involve more parents in the school.</u>

We have discussed above the non-participation in the Parents' Association not only of minority parents, but of white parents as well,

a common phenomenon in high schools. The effect of this non-participation is the unrepresentative nature of the Executive Board of the Parents' Association; virtually all of its members come from the area immediately surrounding the school. Since parents are an indispensable and effective resource in advising school officials on student needs, educational policies, and the like, a representative parents' association would more likely assure that the interests of all students are being met.

Non-participation of parents outside the immediate Madison area probably is the result of the fact that parents confront the same problems of time, travel, etc., in participating in evening meetings as students. The attitudes and cultural values of non-participant parents may also play an important role. But these are not insurmountable barriers that are beyond the power of the school to remove. There are affirmative, aggressive outreach methods that can be used. Such measures might include scheduling meetings alternately in different areas; setting up car pools; and assigning special parent liaisons with special responsibilities for contacting parents of out-of-district students.

13. Procedures should be established to improve communication between the school and the community surrounding Madison.

Reactions of fear and hostility, when they come from the storekeepers and residents of the Madison neighborhood, derive partly from misinformation and lack of information about the school and about the students who pass through their neighborhood to attend it. In such an

atmosphere, rumors and exaggerations can spread quickly, igniting the kind of hostile reactions that further alienate out-of-district students. Such conditions can also contribute to neighborhood instability; without an understanding of what is really happening at Madison, neighbors get a negative image that prompts them to reconsider the desireability of the school for their children and may cause them to leave the area altogether.

What is needed is a regular, concerted effort on behalf of the school administration, parents, and perhaps sympathetic community members to convey factual information about the school, allay fears, and receive complaints that the school can work on or refer to appropriate sources. Good will in the community will be a valuable asset to Madison, and a better understanding of the school can in turn contribute to greater neighborhood stability. School representatives might make regular appearances at synagogues and churches, community centers and similar community institutions to discuss the school and give information and hear complaints. They might participate in the local police Precinct Council where neighborhood leaders meet to discuss matters of common interest. They might invite neighborhood residents and leaders to visit the school to observe it first hand and get a realistic picture of the school and the students.